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RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 0779
RUEHSL/AMEMBASSY BRATISLAVA PRIORITY 0003
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY 6697
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RUEHVJ/AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO PRIORITY 0177
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 0650
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE PRIORITY 0449
RUEHSQ/AMEMBASSY SKOPJE PRIORITY 3470
RUEHSF/AMEMBASSY SOFIA PRIORITY 2434
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM PRIORITY 0819
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RUEHVB/AMEMBASSY ZAGREB PRIORITY 5533
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RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RUEHNO/USDELMC BRUSSELS BE PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 USNATO 000375

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TAGS: [AFDB](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL MEETING: NATO'S SYG GETS
STRATEGIC ON AFGHANISTAN

USNATO 00000375 001.2 OF 005

Classified By: A/DCM Kate Byrnes.
Reasons: 1.4 (b) AND (d).

1. (C) SUMMARY. NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen used the September 2 meeting of the North Atlantic Council to advance his goal for increased NATO strategic policy coordination and guidance for political and military

authorities involved in Afghanistan. Allies generally supported this approach. Work on this initiative will pass to NATO's Policy Coordination Group with the aim of developing priorities and benchmarks of future success to present to Defense Ministers at the October 22-23 meeting in Bratislava. In a discussion on the separate issue of the Shia Personal Status Law, Rasmussen concluded from the Allies' discussion that NATO should not make any public statements on the issue for the time being. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen used the September 2 meeting of the North Atlantic Council to advance his goal for increased NATO strategic policy coordination and guidance for political and military authorities involved in Afghanistan. At the SYG's instigation, Deputy Assistant Secretary General for NATO Operations Larry Rossin identified to PermReps five strategic outcomes in NATO's Comprehensive Strategic Political-Military Plan (CSPMP) that he said were integral to ISAF progress for the remainder of 2009 and 2010. He suggested that NATO should define success factors and proposed that NATO also select benchmarks to assess progress in these five areas between now and the 2010 NATO Summit.

13. (C) The five Desired Strategic Outcomes (DSOs) Rossin highlighted were: ensuring that opposing militant forces do not pose a threat to the Afghan government's ability to exercise authority across the country; Afghans taking over lead security responsibility from ISAF; ensuring Afghans are able to fully participate in the democratic process, both nationally and sub-nationally; ensuring Afghanistan has good

USNATO 00000375 002.2 OF 005

and close relations with its neighbors, particularly Pakistan; and ensuring effective assistance to the Afghan government, including through the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, to enable it to extend its authority throughout Afghanistan.

14. C) Allies generally supported this approach. Germany and France agreed, stating coordination with other international actors already present in Afghanistan was also important to measuring progress. Spain remarked that NATO should not lean towards a mathematical or a purely technical approach but, instead, should include political criteria as benchmarks are prioritized. Ambassador Daalder said the ability to measure success within the next 12-18 months was critical to maintaining support for the ISAF Afghanistan mission among our domestic publics. NATO should be clear on benchmarks and specific on how it measures progress. He said it was critical that NATO be clear and concise on the NATO/ISAF role. The Ambassador said there is a need for a NATO "effect on the ground," highlighting the importance of NATO benchmarks and metrics. He encouraged the Alliance to be clear on what NATO could do and where others, such as UNAMA, should lead. Norway agreed and said there is a need for NATO to ensure priorities identified are, in fact, priorities that NATO as an institution can affect on the ground. Poland encouraged the Council to also consider the public message on NATO's DSO work. The Polish Ambassador said a public statement during the October Ministerial would shine a positive light on NATO's work in a time when public opinion has grown increasingly critical of ISAF's mission in Afghanistan.

15. (C) The SYG himself suggested a push for no more than three DSOs to simplify explaining NATO's focus to the public.

Rasmussen's top three DSOs for ISAF progress were: that opposing militant forces do not pose a threat to the Afghan government's ability to exercise authority across the country; Afghans taking over lead security responsibility

USNATO 00000375 003.2 OF 005

from ISAF; and incorporating a comprehensive approach which would show demonstrable change within the daily lives of the people of Afghanistan. The SYG also clarified that the DSOs should be limited to issues that could be impacted by ISAF, i.e. areas where ISAF could lead and ensure the military

chain of command prioritized attention and resources. The SYG,s said his goal is for NATO to submit a final, decision invoking text for consideration at the October Defense Ministerial in Bratislava.

¶6. (C) The NAC agreed that the PCG should discuss the DSOs in the coming weeks. (Note: The basis of this Council discussion was the NATO Assistant Secretary General for Operations, Martin Howard,s, Food For Thought paper distributed to the PCG on July 10. End note.)

¶7. (C/NF) COMISAF,s 60-day Assessment. Almost every PermRep intervention mentioned the need to view COMISAF,s 60-day report before NATO could identify and prioritize benchmarks for success from the CSPMP document (Note: Perm Reps chose the tactic of subtly expressing their frustration of not receiving a copy of the report, leaving their privately expressed more forceful complaints at the door for this first gathering in a public forum since the report went forward. End note.).

¶8. (C) Shia Personal Status Law. Rasmussen said NATO Senior Civilian Representative, Ambassador Fernando Gentilini, would continue to inform the Council on the latest Shia law developments and NATO would closely coordinate with the United Nations on all public remarks. The SYG reassured Council members that NATO, at this time, would refrain from any public statements unless absolutely necessary, as in a response to a significant turn in events. Norway summed up today,s Council views well, stating, the Secretary General,s letter to President Hamid Karzai, that expressed his preliminary views on the law was sufficient in advance of election results and the ISAF Commander,s 60-day assessment rollout. Although NATO must allow the U.N to lead on the

USNATO 00000375 004.2 OF 005

issue, the Norwegian Ambassador reiterated the need to keep the Afghan people first, by upholding the Afghan government to international human and women,s rights standards, while, simultaneously, walking the fine line between addressing public opinion and remaining silent on the issue.

¶9. (C) Ambassador Daalder said human and women,s rights are a high priority for the U.S. and NATO should lend support to efforts by the Afghan civil society. However, he noted that Afghan civil society itself had concerns about the possible outcomes of public external comment, and asserted that NATO should not take to the pulpit on this issue. Rasmussen concluded that NATO would not make any public statements on the Shia Personal Status Law and promised NATO coordination with the U.N., the organization seen to have the lead on the issue.

¶10. (C) NATO AWACS Deployment. Luxembourg,s Ambassador briefed the Council that, if NATO agreed all AWACS flights would turn off all radar and surveillance equipment during transit of Azeri territory, Azerbaijan would agree to AWACS overflight clearances. There was no objection from the Council. Ambassador Rossin briefed that NATO still awaited a response from the UAE on the NATO AWACS MOU. He said negotiations with Turkmenistan were on hold until an agreement with Azerbaijan is completed (Note: A robust AWACS discussion is on the agenda for the next NAC discussion, at which time, details of progressing basing negotiations with other Gulf nations will be unveiled. End note).

¶11. (C) 2009 UNODC Report. The British Ambassador previewed the U.N. Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) report as containing good news on counternarcotics efforts. He said the report announced a 22% decrease in opium production, a 33 % decrease in Helmand province, specifically, and ISAF,s work to disrupt the insurgency narcotics trade as positive.

USNATO 00000375 005.2 OF 005

The U.K. Ambassador encouraged NATO to capitalize on the report,s positive counternarcotics trends through NATO strategic communications. Rasmussen responded positively to

this suggestion, stating he would highlight the UNODC report analysis in his next press conference. The UNODC report will be discussed in detail at the September 18 Council meeting.
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